

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 05873 171839Z
ACTION ARA-14

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-----070357 172301Z /66

R 171801Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3214
INFO PANCANAL
USCINCSO

UNCLAS PANAMA 5873

DEPT FOR ARA/PAF AND PAN
USCINCSO FOR J-2 AND PAO
PANCANAL FOR IO

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, PN
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTIONS

FOLG SENT ACTION PRIORITY USINFO WASHDC INFO SECSTATE WASHDC
AUG 17 FROM USIS/PANAMA RPTD YOUR INFO

QUOTE
UNCLAS

SECSTATE FOR ARA/PAF & PAN

EO 11652: N/A

MEDIA REACTION

1. TREATY NEGOTIATIONS: TREATY COVERAGE CONTINUED MODERATE
AUGUST 17 MORNINGS. THREE OF FOUR PAPERS FRONT-PAGED WIRE
SERVICE REPORTS OF EX-PRESIDENT FORD'S SUPPORT OF TREATY.
CRITICA FRONT-PAGES PHOTO OF TIME COVER, MENTIONING THAT TIME
AND NEWSWEEK COVER STORIES ARE ON CANAL, AND REPRINTS TEXT
OF TIME ARTICLE ON INSIDE PAGES.

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2. AUGUST 17 AFTERNOONER LA REPUBLICA CARRIES PAGE ONE HEAD,
"GUAYCUCHOS, PEDRESCHI, ROBLES AND BORIS SPEAK OUT AGAINST
TREATY." FULL PAGE-THREE STORY CONSISTS OF TEXTS OF OPEN
LETTERS AND COMMUNIQUE FROM GUAYCUCHOS, LEFTIST STUDENT
POLITICAL GROUP, LAWYER CARLOS BOLIVAR PEDRESCHI, EXILES
WINSTON ROBLES AND BORIS MARTINEZ, AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS.

BROADSHEET ATTRIBUTED TO GUAYCUCOS ACTUALLY COMES FROM FER, ANOTHER STUDENT GROUP. INTRO TO ARTICLE SAYS THAT CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT TREATY, ESPECIALLY NEUTRALITY PACT, IS UNDERWAY, BOTH BY ANTI-GOVERNMENT GROUPS AND ZONE RESIDENTS, "WHO HAVE SHOWN THEMSELVES READY TO JOIN FORCES WITH ANY NATIONAL PANAMANIAN GROUP, SUCH AS THE INDEPENDENT LAWYERS, RADICAL STUDENTS, EXILES AND ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL GROUPS, WITH WHICH TO PREVENT A NEW TREATY FROM BEING APPROVED BY PANAMA AND THE U.S."

3. MATUTINO FRONT-PAGES, CRITICA BACK-PAGES REPORT OF MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 19, TO DISCUSS TREATY PROVISIONS WITH NEGOTIATING TEAM.

4. LA REPUBLICA ENGLISH SECTION CARRIES ARTICLE ON BRIEFING BY NEGOTIATOR EDWIN FABREGA TO STUDENT LEADERS AUGUST 13. SPANISH ITEM CARRIED AUGUST 16. FABREGA REPORTED AS SAYING RAILROAD, ANCON HILL, AND PORTS OF CRISTOBAL AND BALBOA WILL BE RETURNED TO PANAMA UPON TREATY RATIFICATION. HE ALSO TOLD STUDENTS SUCH LOCATIONS AS FRANCE FIELD, COCO SOLO, FORT GULICK AND FORT RANDOLPH, AS WELL AS TOWNS OF RAINBOW CITY, ARAISO AND PEDRO MIGUEL WILL BECOME PART OF PANAMA UPON RATIFICATION. TOTAL WILL BE 70 PER CENT OF ZONE LAND, ARTICLE SAYS.

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5. LA REPUBLICA ENGLISH REPRINTS WILLIAM BUCKLEY COLUMN WASHINGTON STAR COLUMN SUPPORTING TREATY RATIFICATION, AND UPI WASHINGTON NICHOLAS DANILOFF STORY HEADED, "TREATY BACKERS IN WASHINGTON SAY 100,000 U.S. TROOPS WOULD BE NEEDED TO PROTECT WATERWAY AGAINST ATTACK."

6. CRITICA EDIT POINTS OUT LONG ROAD AND MANY OBSTACLES YET TO OVERCOME BEFORE TREATY GOES INTO EFFECT, SINCE IT HAS MANY ENEMIES. AMONG THESE, EDIT SAYS, ARE U.S. COLUMNISTS WHO SAY U.S. NEGOTIATED TREATY WITH PANAMA ONLY BECAUSE IT FEARED TROUBLE IN LATAM, NOT BECAUSE IT FELT GUILTY ABOUT PAST TREATMENT OF PANAMA. CRITICA REJECTS THIS THEORY: "THEY ARE SIMPLY REPAIRING A TREMENDOUS INJUSTICE PERPETRATED DURING 70 YEARS AND WHICH MUST STILL BE SUPPORTED PARTIALLY UNTIL THE YEAR 2000... AS FOR THE PEOPLE SOUTH OF THE RIO GRANDE, THEY KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT US TO KNOW THAT ITS PRIDE WOULD NOT PERMIT THEM TO INTONE "MEA CULPA", AND THAT IF IT MODIFIES ITS POLICY WITH OUR NATIONS, ITS OWN INTERESTS ARE ALSO AT PLAY."

7. MATUTINO EDIT NOTES WITH APPROVAL AMB. YOUNG STATEMENTS THAT US HAS TENDED TO FORGET LATAM DURING YEARS FROM 1964

TO 1976. "AND NOW," SAYS EDIT, "UPON AWAKING FROM THIS TIME WARP IN WHICH IT WAS ASLEEP, THE U.S. HAS REALIZED WITH INGENUOUS SURPRISE THAT IT IS OF INCALCULABLE URGENCY THAT IT MAKE UP THE LOST TIME, FOR WHICH THEY MUST REDOUBLE NOT ONLY THE SPEED OF THE MARCH, BUT ALSO THE INTENSITY OF THE ACTION."

8. MATUTINO CONTINUES THAT US DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO REESTABLISH POLICIES OF GOOD WILL HAVE TO WORK HARD AND LONG. "THE APPROVAL OF NEW TREATY WITH PANAMA BY US SENATE, WOULD BE GREAT OPPORTUNITY... FOR THE US TO DEMONSTRATE ITS SINCERITY." AMB. YOUNG'S WORDS, HOWEVER, "ARE FAR FROM BEING FOUND IN MENTAL ATTITUDE OF APPROACHMENT WITH LATAM COUNTRIES, IN WHICH PRES. CARTER IS FOUND. AND IF THIS BLINDNESS
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PROVOKES RESURGENCE OF FORGETFULNESS, CONSEQUENCES FOR WORLD CAN BE VERY COSTLY..."

9. ESTRELLA ITEM MENTIONED IN AUG. 16 MEDIA REAACTION, ON TREATY FACT SHEET, WAS TRANSLATION OF STATE DEPARTMENT FACT SHEET, ISSUED BY PAN CANAL COMPANY WITHOUT EMBASSY KNOWLEDGE. ITEM
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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